

The Chalice of Courage

Being the Story of Certain Persons Who Drank of it and Conquered

A Romance of Colorado

By **Cyrus Townsend Brady**

Author of "The King and the Lion," "The Island of Regeneration," "The Better Man," "Hearts and the Highway," "As the Sparks Fly Upward," etc., etc.

Illustrations by **Elsworth Young**

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CHAPTER X.

On the Two Sides of the Door.

The cabin contained a large and a small room. In the wall between them there was a doorway closed by an ordinary batten door with a wooden latch and no lock. Closed it served to hide the occupant of one room from the view of the other, otherwise it was but a feeble protection. Even had it possessed a lock, a vigorous man could have burst it through in a moment.

These thoughts did not come very clearly to Enid Maitland. Few thoughts of any kind came to her. Where she lay she could see plainly the dancing light of the glorious fire. She was warm, the deftly wrapped bandage, the healing lotion upon her foot, had greatly relieved the pain in that wounded member. The bed was hard but comfortable, much more so than the sleeping bags to which of late she had been accustomed.

Few women had gone through such experiences, mental and physical, as had befallen her within the last few hours and lived to tell the story. Had it not been for the exhaustive strains of body and spirit to which she had been subjected, her mental faculties would have been on the alert and the strangeness of her unique position would have made her so nervous that she could not have slept.

For the time being, however, the physical demands upon her enervated were paramount; she was dry, she was warm, she was fed, she was free from anxiety and she was absolutely unutterably weary. Her thoughts were vague, inchoate, unconcentrated. The fire wavered before her eyes, she closed them in a few moments and did not open them.

Without a thought, without a care, she fell asleep. Her repose was complete, not a dream even disturbed the profound slumber into which she sank. Pretty picture she made: her head thrown backward, her golden hair roughly dried and quickly plaited in long braids, one of which fell along the pillow while the other curled lovingly around her neck. Her face in the natural light would have looked pallid from what she had gone through, but the fire cast red glows upon it; the fitful light flickered across her countenance and sometimes deep shadows unrelieved accentuated the paleness born of her sufferings.

There is no light that plays so many tricks with the imagination, or that so stimulates the fancy as the light of an open fire. In its sudden outbursts it sometimes seems to add life touches to the sleeping and the dead. Had there been any eye to see this girl, she would have made a delightful picture in the warm glow from the stone hearth. There were no eyes to look, however, save those which belonged to the man on the other side of the door.

On the hither side of that door in the room where the fire burned on the hearth, there was rest in the heart of the occupant; on the farther side where the fire only burned in the heart, there was tumult. Not outward and visible, but inward and spiritual, and yet there was no lack of apparent manifestation of the turmoil in the man's soul.

Albeit the room was smaller than the other, it was still of a good size. He walked nervously up and down from one end to the other as ceaselessly as a wild animal impatient of captivity stalks the narrow limits of his contracted cage. The even tenor of his life had suddenly been diverted. The ordinary sequence of his days had been abruptly changed. The privacy of five years which he had hoped and dreamed might exist as long as he, had been rudely broken in upon. Humanity, which he had avoided from which he had fled, which he had cast away forever, had found him. Abilt, excessit, evant, erupt! And, lo his departures were all in vain! The world with all its grandeur and its significance, with all its powers and its weaknesses, with all its opportunities and its obligations, with all its joys and its sorrows, had knocked at

his door; and that the knocking hand was that of a woman, but added to his perplexity and to his dismay.

He had cherished a dream that he could live to himself alone with but a memory to bear him company, and from that dream he had been thunderously awakened. Everything was changed. What had once been easy had now become impossible. He might send her away, but though he swore her to secrecy she would have to tell her story and something of his;

the world would learn some of it and seek him out with insatiable curiosity to know the rest.

Eyes as keen as his would presently search and scrutinize the mountains where he had roamed alone. They would see what he had seen, find what he had found. Mankind, gold-hungry, would swarm and live upon the hills and fight and love and breed and die. Great God!

He could of course move on, but where? And went he whithersoever he might, he would now of necessity carry with him another memory which would not dwell within his mind in harmony with the memory which until that day had been paramount there alone.

Slowly, laboriously, painfully, he had built his house upon the sand, and the winds had blown and the floods had come, not only in a literal but in spiritual significance, and in one day that house had fallen. He stood amid the wrecked remains of it trying to recreate it, to endow once more with the fitted precision of the past the shapeless broken units of the fabric of his fond imagination.

While he resented the fierce, savage, passionate intensity the interruption of this woman into his life. While he throbbed with equal intensity and almost as much passion at the thought of her.

Have you ever climbed a mountain early in the morning while it was yet dark and having gained some dominant crest stood staring at the far horizon, the empyrean east, while the "dawn came up like thunder?" Or better still, have you ever stood within the cold, dark recesses of some deep valley of river or pass and watched the clear light spread its bars athwart the heavens like nebulous mighty pinions along the light touched crest of a towering range, until all of a sudden, with a leap almost of joy, the great sun blazed in the high horizon?

You might be born a child of the dark, and light might sear and burn your eye balls accustomed to cooler deeper shades, yet you could no more turn away from this glory, though you might hate it, than by mere effort of will you could cease to breathe the air. The shock that you might feel, the sudden surprise, is only faintly suggestive of the emotions in the breast of this man.

Once long ago the gentlest and tenderest of voices called from the dark to the light, the blind. And it is given to modern science and to modern skill sometimes to emulate that godlike achievement. Perhaps the surprise, the amazement, the bewilderment, of him who having been blind doth now see, if we can imagine it not having been in the case ourselves, will be a better guide to the understanding of this man's emotion when this woman came suddenly into his lonely orbit. His eyes were opened although he would not know it. He fought down his new consciousness and would have none of it. Yet it was there. He loved her!

With what joy did Selkirk welcome the savage shiver of his solitude! Suppose she had been a woman of his own race; had she been old, withered, hideous, he must have loved her on the instant, much more if she were young and beautiful. The thing was inevitable. Such passions are born. God forbid that we should deny it. In the busy haunts of men where women are as plenty as blackberries, to use Falstaff's simile, and where a man may sometimes choose between a hundred, or a thousand, such loves are born, forever.

A voice in the night, a face in the street, a whispered word, the touch of a hand, the answering throb of another heart—and behold! two walk to-

gether where before each walked alone. Sometimes the man or the woman who is born again of love knows it not, refuses to admit it, refuses to recognize it. Some birth pain must awaken the consciousness of the new life.

If those things are true and possible under every day conditions and to ordinary men and women, how much more to this solitary. He had seen this woman, white breasted like the foam, rising as the ancient goddess from the Paphian sea. Over that recollection, as he was a gentleman and a Christian, he would fain draw a curtain, before it erect a wall. He must not dwell upon that fact, he would not linger over that moment. Yet he could not forget it.

Then he had seen her lying prone, yet unconsciously graceful in her abandonment, on the ward; he had caught a glimpse of her white face desperately upturned by the rolling water; he had looked into the unfathomable depth of her eyes at that moment when she had awakened in his arms after such a struggle as had taxed his manhood and almost broken his heart; he had carried her unconsciously, ghostly white with fier pain-drawn face, stumbling desperately over the rocks in the beating rain to this, his home. There he had held that poor, bruised slender little foot in his hand, gently, skilfully treating it, when he longed to press his lips passionately upon it. Last of all he had looked into her face, warmed with the red light of the fire, searched her weary eyes almost like blue pools, in whose depths there yet lurked life and light, while her golden hair tinged crimson by the blaze lay on the white pillow—and he loved her. God pity him, fighting against fact and admission of it, yet how could he help it?

He had loved once before in his life, with the fire of youth and spring, but it was not like this. He did not recognize this new passion in any light from the past; therefore he would not admit it. Hence, he did not understand it. But he saw and admitted and understood enough to know that the past was no longer the supreme subject in his life, that the present rose higher, bulked larger and hid more and more of his far-off horizon.

He felt like a knave and a traitor, as if he had been base, disloyal, false to his ideal, recalcant to his remembrance. Was he indeed a true man? Did he have that rugged strength, that abiding faith, that eternal consciousness, that lasting affection, beside which the rocky paths he often trod were things transient, perishable, evanescent? Was he a weakling that he fell at the first sight of another woman?

He stopped his ceaseless pace forward and backward, and stopped near that frail and futile door. She was there and there was none to prevent. His hand sought the latch.

What was he about to do? God forbid that a thought he could not freely share with humanity should enter his brain then. He held all women sacred, and so he had ever done, and this woman in her loneliness, in her helplessness, in her weakness, trebly appealed to him. But he would look upon her, he would fain see if she were there, if it were all not a dream, the creation of his disordered imagination.

Men had gone mad in hermitages in the mountains, they had been driven insane in lonely oases in vast deserts; and they had peopled their solitude with men and women. Was this some working of a disordered brain, too too much turned upon itself and with too tremendous a pressure upon it, producing an illusion? Was there in truth any woman there? He would raise the latch and open the door and look. Once more the hand went stealthily to the latch.

The woman slept quietly on. No thin barricade easily unlocked or easily broken protected her. Something intangible, yet stronger than the thickest, the most rigid bars of steel guarded her; something unseen, indescribable, but so unmistakable when it throbs in the breast of those who depend on it feel that their dependence is not in vain watched over her.

Cherishing no evil thought, the man had power to gratify his desire which might yet bear a sinister construction should it be observed. It was her privacy he was invading. She had trusted to him, she had said so, to his honor, and that stood her in good stead. His honor! Not in five years had he heard the word or thought the thing, but he had not forgotten it. She had not appealed to an unreal thing; upon that her trust was based. His hand left the latch, it fell gently, he drew back and turned away trembling, a conqueror who mastered himself. He was awake to the truth again.

What had he been about to do? Profane, uninvited, the sanctity of her chamber, violate the hospitality of his own house? Even with a proper motive, imperil his self-respect, shatter her trust, endanger that honor which

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so suddenly became a part of him on demand? She would not probably know; she could never know unless she awoke. What of that? That ancient honor of his life and race rose like a mountain whose scarped face cannot be scaled.

To be continued

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

Department of the Interior
U. S. Land Office at Santa Fe, N. M.

March 18, 1912.

Notice is hereby given that Henry H. Stuewig, of Estancia, New Mexico, who, on April 10th, 1907, made Homestead entry No. 10992, 04094 for NW 1/4 Section 5, Township 6 north, Range 8 east, N. M. P. Meridian, has filed notice of intention to make final five year proof, to establish claim to the land above described, before Neal Jensen, U. S. Commissioner, at Estancia, New Mexico, on the 4th day of May, 1912.

Claimant names as witnesses:

J. M. Tuttle, O. P. Turner, J. B. Williams, J. D. Childers all of Estancia, New Mexico. 3-22-4 26

MANUEL R. OTERO, Register.

WELL SHOT SOME MORE

The Green well was blown up some more Monday. When the first charge was put down the water was standing about forty-five feet from the top. The charge was touched off, but nothing transpired. After a time the shooters became discouraged, but it was noticed that the water was rising in the well, and presently it came to the surface and flowed for about twenty minutes, then receded.

Another charge was put in, without apparent effect, but when the crowd left today the water was within twenty-two feet of the surface and showing some signs of ebullition.

In connection with this well shooting it should be remembered that the object in view is to develop artesian water.

It has already been sufficiently demonstrated that there is ample water for irrigation by pumping.

The meetings at the Baptist church closed Sunday night. There was a good attendance and interest throughout, and it is believed that much good was accomplished. There were several additions to the church as a result of the meetings, and a considerable revival of interest among the members also.

Monday

The Howell Mercantile Co. got in a car of flour and feed today.

The Estancia Lumber Co. re-

ceived a car of cement today.

W. H. Beatty came down from McIntosh today.

Mr. Bond departed today for Montreal.

Rice Pettus and Matt Freilinger will leave tomorrow for Albuquerque and will stay indefinitely.

Rev. Vermillion left last night after the services for Willard in an automobile. He is on his way to Hope, where he will conduct a two weeks revival.

Miss Ruth Fogerty, who has spent the last few days visiting friends here, left Sunday for her home at Moriarty and from there she goes on to Santa Fe.

Rev. W. C. Grant returned today from Duran, where he had been on church work.

Joe Pettus of Albuquerque, spent Sunday with his mother, Mrs. John Lasater.

George Hardin left today to take up work with some well drillers who are at work about fifty miles from Gallup.

The Romero store received a car of flour and feed today.

Pale Faces

Pale-faced, weak, and shaky women—who suffer every day with womanly weakness—need the help of a gentle tonic, with a building action on the womanly system. If you are weak—you need Cardui, the woman's tonic, because Cardui will act directly on the cause of your trouble. Cardui has a record of more than 50 years of success. It must be good.

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Mrs. Effie Graham, of Willard, Ky., says: "I was so weak I could hardly go. I suffered, nearly every month, for 3 years. When I began to take Cardui, my back hurt awfully. I only weighed 99 pounds. Not long after, I weighed 115. Now, I do all my work, and am in good health." Begin taking Cardui, today.